

7306 99 1

AN
ESSAY
ON
SCROPHULA
and
Glandular Consumption ;

BRADFORD: 99

PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. SEDGWICK.

Price 2s. 6d.

7

AN
ESSAY
ON
SCROPHULA



BRADFORD,
PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. SEDGWICK.

Price 2s. 6d.

AN
ESSAY, 7
to elucidate
the Nature, Origin, and Connexion
OF
SROPHULA,
AND
Glandular Consumption ;
including a brief History of the Effects of
ILKLEY SPAW.
With OBSERVATIONS on the MEDICINAL POWERS
of the
DIGITALIS ;
and Strictures on the Opinions of
Dr. Lettsom,
relative to the Virtues of that Plant.

By *GEORGE MOSSMAN, M. D.*

Forsan miseros meliora sequentur. VIRG.

BRADFORD :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. SEDGWICK ;

And by J. JOHNSON, St. Paul's Church-Yard ; H. HODGSON,
Corner of Wimpole-Street, Mary le Bone, LONDON :

J. GUTHRIE, Nicholson's-Street, EDINBURGH ; by J. BINNS,
Leeds ; J. HURST, Wakefield : and EDWARDS, Halifax.

the Nature, Origin, and Connexion
to elucidate

Glandular Consumption;

WALKLEY SPARK



BY GEORGE MOSZMAN, M.D.

ДОТЧЕ

Printed and Sold by R. S. BOWMAN;
And by J. J. JONES, at the Church-Yard, in the
Corner of Wm. Street, N. York, LONDON.

To Dr. BEDDOES,

S I R.

I am well persuaded, that there needs no apology, for addressing to you, any attempt to lessen the accumulated mass of human evil.—Your benevolent labours have commanded the warm applause,—and have secured to you the lively gratitude, of mankind.—Accept of this Essay as a small tribute of my esteem :—it took its origin from an anxiety, which I felt, to obviate the fatality of Consumptions ; and to afford an additional testimony in favor of a celebrated plant. In those

pages, which I present to you, I have endeavoured to banish from my mind the influence of preconceived opinions ; and I have been ambitious to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.—I have attempted to observe and to think for myself, and I trust, that the remarks which I have made, will be established by future experience.—I hope, and I believe that the time is approaching, when medical judgment will be less fettered by the prejudices acquired within the walls of Universities;—and when, under the direction of a liberal spirit of investigation, it will become more solicitous to detect, and to expose errors, whether they claim the sanction of antiquity, or stand upon the credit of some celebrated name.—If this revolution be accomplished, it is probable, that it will operate very powerfully in clearing away the strata of false knowledge ; and that it will lead to a more close observation, of the connecting circumstances of agreement, which subsist among the phænomena of nature, so as to war-

vii.

rant the formation of General Laws,—At this auspicious period, it is to be expected, that mind should obtain a more compleat dominion over matter ; and that “ a mighty mass of evil will be gradually diminished ; and finally disappear from the face “ of the earth.”

Accept, Sir, of my most perfect regards ;—may your talents continue to be actively employed in the pursuit of truth ;—may the result of your literary labours be productive of an universal melioration of the lot of man ; and may the blessing of thousands which were ready to perish, be your present, and your future reward.—

I have the honor to be

with high respect,

Bradford, Jan. 15th.

your's obediently,

GEO. MOSSMAN.

and the formation of General Laws.—At this
 cious period, it is to be expected, that mind should
 obtain a more complete dominion over matter; and
 that "a mighty mass of evil will be gradually
 "minished; and finally disappear from the face
 "of the earth."

Accept, Sir, of my most perfect regards.—
 may your talents continue to be actively employed
 in the pursuit of truth;—may the result of your
 literary labours be productive of an universal im-
 provement of the lot of man; and may the blessing of
 thousands which were ready to perish be your por-
 tion, and your future reward.

I have the honor to be,
 with high respect,
 Yours obediently,
 Bradford, Jan. 18th.

GEO. MORRIS.

AN
ESSAY
 ON
SCROPHULA
 AND
GLANDULAR CONSUMPTION.

IF the Science of Medicine be susceptible of observation and experiment, it is much to be lamented, that there should be such a variety of opinion, relative to its application in the cure of disease.—

The medical men of the present age, are indisputably better informed, than those of the last century; and it is proper to expect that a greater similarity of sentiment, should be the result of this increased knowledge. I am well persuaded, however, that this is not the case;—and I believe that the causes, which operate as preventives of a more general coalition of sentiment, are reducible either to the ser-

vile veneration which we profess for the doctrines of others, or to the blind obstinacy, with which we support those opinions we call our own.—We are too often impatient of a close analysis of the phænomena of nature ; and therefore we must credulously adhere to the received lessons of the schools ; or we must collect the sum of our knowledge, from a superficial observation of loose, unconnected appearances.—A thoughtless acceptance of opinions from this Doctor, or from that Professor ; or a careless espousal of a creed upon the authority of a few anomalous data ; are both unsatisfactory methods of acquiring information.—If knowledge so obtained, be employed to manage the instruments of an art so closely interwoven with human happiness ; and if the practice of medicine be made the superstructure of an opinion, surely this last should be founded on the broad basis of a general Law, established by a persevering spirit of research ;—an accurate observation of the various phænomena of nature ;—a judicious arrangement, and comparison of those appearances ;—and a comprehensive induction from facts cautiously and fairly collected.

If a man exhibit a new system, it is expected that he support it by the evidence of observation and experiment; if he assail an old one, it is expected that he subvert it by a similar testimony.—If much still remains to be known, and if the ultimate object of all our knowledge be, to improve the condition of man, I think that no authority should be exerted to over-awe the speculation of any individual;—for if mankind be benefited, it is surely immaterial to them from whose hands the benefits flow. A biggoted devotion to antiquity, and a jealous dread of innovation, are ideas completely repugnant to improvement:—If a doctrine be novel, we should submit it to the test of a liberal trial; and when an enlarged experience enables us fully to decide upon its merits, we are then, and not till then, justified in adopting or rejecting it. It too frequently happens, however, that the opponents of a new opinion are numerous, and difficult of propitiation; we are often persuaded that the discovery last made, is the very last that can be made; and under the impression of this prejudice, we are unbecomingly eager to vilify a discovery, and to calumniate its inventor, without giving ourselves leisure

to appreciate either.—If we be ambitious to encourage an extension of the *Arts*; it is surely inconsistent that we should employ our influence to impede the progress of the *Sciences*;—that a despotic effort however, has been made, by the application of the most illiberal means, to crush a new and important branch of philosophy, I need only appeal to the fate of departed genius, and to the history of a doctrine since denominated the *Brunonian*.—The applause which the author of that system acquired; the favor, and the partiality of his friends with which he was so deservedly honored; the respect and veneration which his talents, and his unbounded genius uniformly commanded, excited the jealousy of his cotemporaries; and his reputation was whispered away with much industry, when no possible reason could be assigned, except that he had partially supplanted their doctrines, by the introduction of opinions, “highly ingenious, and generally just.”



IN the following Essay, I shall exhibit brief histories of the phænomena of *Scrophula* and *Glandular Consumption*:—I shall endeavour to establish

an analogy between the *Scrophulous* and *Consumptive* habits;—I shall bring into view some of the most popular medicines, which have been employed in the cure of both diseases;—I shall attempt to appreciate their several powers;—and I shall conclude with an account of those remedies, which I have found most effectual in alleviating palliatively, or radically, the distressing symptoms connected with both complaints.——

~~~~~

WITHOUT enquiring into its antiquity, I shall proceed to mark the more remote, and more obvious appearances characteristic of *Scrophula*.—Some of its features are so strikingly apparent, that a particular specification may be deemed unnecessary; but there are minute circumstances attending the commencement and progress of *Scrophula*, which I consider of much importance, in establishing the analogy between that disease and *Consumption*.

I think that *Scrophula* occurs more frequently in manufacturing, than in farming countries;—this

circumstance I ascribe to the sedentary occupations which employ the inhabitants of commercial towns. I observe that the effect of this inactivity, is a *relaxation of the muscular fibre* ; which, with the co-operation of gross, indigestible aliment, forms the basis, as I think, of *glandular obstruction*.—However this may be ; or whatever difference of opinion may prevail respecting the origin of *Scrophula*, and the means of affording relief ; it is a remarkable fact, that all authors agree, in describing the identical habit, peculiarly liable to this disease.—In their definitions too, tho' they may differ respecting minutiae ; yet the prominent features of *Scrophula* are brought forward by them all. *Dr. Cullen's* nosological description, tho' the most minute, is in my opinion the most exceptionable ;—the “*tumidum abdomen,*” is very generally symptomatic of *Scrophula* when it attacks the glands of the mýsentry ; but I have seldom observed this appearance, where *Scrophula* presented itself in its usual form, unconnected with other diseases.

The “*labium superius et columna nasi tumida,*” are by no means frequent appearances.—The perse-



vering industry, and the brilliancy of talent, which characterised that very celebrated Physician have long been the admiration of Europe; I too, most willingly, subscribe to the general vote of applause, to which the memory of *Dr. Cullen* is so justly entitled, nor shall I ever cease to recognize with veneration, the powers of his expanded mind, so long, so actively, and so laudably employed in attempting to improve one of the most important branches of human knowlege;—but as my opinions, upon the subject of *Scrophula*, are founded exclusively upon the basis of observation, and of a very enlarged experience, I cannot doubt of their legitimacy;—and I am persuaded, that during the last twelve years, I have seen and prescribed to, as many scrophulous patients, as the late respectable professor did, during a practice of fifty.——

The following definition of *Scrophula* by *Linnaeus*, tho' perhaps not sufficiently comprehensive, is, in my mind, the most correct;——“*Glandula infarcta, nodus indolens, solidiusculus, pressione obtuse sentiens.*”——

I have already observed, that all authors are agreed respecting the habits which are most subject to *Scrophula*;—for they unanimously assert, that the disease is almost exclusively confined to those of a soft, flaccid, delicate texture, with fair hair, blue eyes, and rosy complexions.—Those appearances which I have now described, have been so striking, as to force themselves upon the notice of every nosologist; and I think, they may be considered as strong indications of, and ultimately connected with, that *relaxed state of the system*, which I believe, to be the root of all the subsequent phenomena.—The *morbid affection of the glands*, is, I think referrible to this existing cause;—if so, I conclude that *Debility* and *Obsruction* stand to each other in the ratio of cause and effect; and are explanatory of every future form of the disease.

The reasoning which has been adopted to prove that *Scrophula* is *hereditary*, appears to me to be inconclusive.—It is proper to expect that the same causes should produce similar effects, in situations precisely similar;—if the habits already described, be those, which are almost exclusively liable to

*scrophulous affections* ;—if the habits of children do very generally resemble those of their parents ; and if those parents labour under *Scrophula*,—I am well aware that the children of such parents, will be liable to the influence of *Scrophula*, more or less, in proportion to the frequency or power of the application of the supposed causes of the disease. If a child be the offspring of a scrophulous parent ; if he resemble that diseased parent in habit ; and if no means are employed in early infancy to obviate a relaxed state of the muscular fibre, it is highly probable, that this habit will, at some period or other, exhibit symptoms of glandular obstruction, and other phænomena constituting *Scrophula* in all its deformity.—It is very certainly true, in families, where one of the parents is afflicted with *scrophula*, that those children *only*, are attacked by the complaint, who resemble the diseased parent in habit, complexion and feature ;—from this circumstance, I infer, that the laxity of the muscular fibre, attached to the parent, is transmitted to the child ;—and that there is good reason to suppose that *scrophula* will assail a habit thus predis-



posed ;---unless such predisposition be obviated by the application of proper powers.

If *Scrophula* be communicated by what is called a *hereditary morbid affection of the whole circulating mass* ;----I naturally infer that *all* the children of the same family, should be equally liable to the operation of this diseased state of the fluids.---If a mother labour under symptoms of *Scrophula*, the offspring of that female, having *all* been formed in circumstances precisely similar ; and having *all* derived from her juices the component materials of their frames, should be *all* equally subject to *Scrophula* ; but this conclusion is most certainly irreconcilable with the fact.

Again, I very frequently see children entirely free from this malady, who are descended from scrophulous parents, without the possibility of assigning any other reason, than that proper means were early employed to counteract the effects of predisposition. The plan which has been successfully adopted to accomplish this end, is by no means calculated to correct, or to produce any

change in the system of fluids ;—its exclusive tendency (as will be shewn hereafter) is to impart the necessary tone to the muscular fibre.

*Scrophula* must have had an origin at some time, and under certain circumstances ; but from what I have observed, I think it sufficiently probable that the common idea of its being *hereditary*, is not founded on fact.—I undoubtedly think, that the children of scrophulous parents, are born with a predisposition to that disease ; but I think that that predisposition, is the effect of a natural laxity of the muscular fibre ;—and it appears to me that there is a want of precision in characterizing any *disease hereditary*, when the sum of our reasoning amounts to prove nothing more than a *hereditary predisposition*.

From a perpetual change of the state of the circulating system, occasioned by the variety of our aliment,—I think it improbable, that any quality of that system, should form a permanent source of any disease ;—On the contrary, I am of opinion, that the origin of *Scrophula* is exclusively

referrible to the cause already assigned ; for I am persuaded that this disease is prevalent, and prevalent only, in habits characterized by delicacy and relaxation ;——that it very frequently attacks feeble children, when there is not the least ground to suspect any affection on the part of the parents ;——and that its approach may be very certainly counteracted by the means best calculated to obviate debility.

It has been observed that the *small pox* is often followed by symptoms of *Scrophula* ;——and the reason assigned is, that what is called the “*retrocedent matter*” has not been sufficiently purged “*off.*”——It is certainly true that *Scrophula* very frequently succeeds to *eruptive diseases* ;——but it should be observed, that these diseases do generally make their attack in the early part of life,——and that the first appearance of *Scrophula* is almost constantly confined to the same period ; I am therefore prepared to hear of *Scrophula* being dated from the termination of those complaints which prevail at an early stage of life.——There appears however to be no more connexion between *Scrophula*



and *small pox*, than there is between *scrophula* and *scarlatina*, and I am inclined to believe, if *scarlatina* were as generally prevalent among children as *small pox*, that the origin of *Scrophula* would be as often traced to the former, as to the latter affection.—Again, I cannot conceive that the “retrocedent matter,” should operate as an exciting cause, for it is a very common observation, that *Scrophula* more frequently follows the *measles* than the *small pox*; if this remark be true, it is completely subversive of the doctrine of “retrocedent matter,” being in any degree productive of the phænomena of *Scrophula*;—in the *measles* there is no matter formed, and therefore its *retrocession* cannot account for the production of any disease.

It has been asserted, that *scrophula* follows the *innoculated*, more frequently than the *natural small pox*;—this opinion, in every point of view, is certainly irreconcilable with the fact;—for upon the supposition that *scrophula* is exclusively a disease of the fluids, and that that morbid state of the circulating system is occasioned solely by *small pox*;—or that *scrophula* challenges the pre-ex-

istence of *small pox*, merely as an exciting cause, it is very generally true, that the virus of *small pox* is less actively applied under the circumstances of *innoculation*, than under those of the *natural small pox*.

If it be maintained that there is a *something* which must be discharged, inasmuch as its presence is incompatible with the future health of the system,—it may be asked what became of that *something* previous to the introduction of the disease to this island? And what becomes of it in those people who never have the *small pox*?—Further, if the “retrocedent matter” of *small pox* be assumed as a very general basis of *scrophula*, I imagine that *mercury* would operate as a positive specific in the cure of the latter disease;—I conclude that this would be the case, for I am in possession of indisputable, experimental evidence, that *mercury* is equally destructive of the *variolous*, as it is of the *venereal virus*.——In short, I believe that *scrophula* is not more referrible to the termination of *small pox* or *measles* than it is to any other disease incident to infancy; and that by

whatever means, a general relaxation of the system be induced, in proportion to the degree of debility, the habit will be more or less predisposed to the formation of *Scrophula*.——This will be the case in the early stages of life; and in the more advanced, we find *Scrophula* succeeded by *glandular consumption*, or *Phthisis Pulmonalis*.

The progress of *Scrophula* is marked by the presence of small, hard, moveable tumors in various parts of the body; but chiefly about the neck, under the ears and chin.——These tumors are insensible, unless they are roughly pressed;——they first affect the *lymphatic*, and at a more advanced stage, they seize the *salivary* glands; but they may, and they often do, remain in the same state for months and even years.——From the operation however, of accidental causes, a tumor begins to increase in size, and soon afterwards becomes a little painful; it gradually grows softer;——after a certain time a remote fluctuation of matter may be perceived;——and by a very tedious process indeed it makes its approach to *suppuration*.——This stage is characterized by



by the integuments assuming a florid or purplish colour, which by degrees becomes paler, till from the most prominent point, a thin ichor be poured out, from an almost invisible opening,—this discharge continues to lessen the tumor; and when the orifice is more enlarged, we very frequently meet with a thick cheesy substance;—upon the removal of which the tumor contracts, and becomes level with the surface of the skin.—

The ulcer thus formed, whether deep or superficial, shews little tendency to cicatrization; and the quality of the matter discharged, depends much upon the powers which have been employed for its melioration.

The process described continues to be repeated in other glands, and in various parts of the body;—the disease, however in its progress sometimes seizes the joints, and exhibits appearances of a very unfavourable nature.—

When ulcers of great magnitude are seated in the larger joints, the discharge becomes profuse; the system of ligaments is destroyed; and the most fortunate termination is a partial loss of motion;

but it more frequently happens that not only the muscular, but also the osseous parts are corroded ; and if amputation of the morbid limb be not resorted to, a symptomatic fever, with all its wasting evacuations, assails the unhappy sufferer, and eventually closes the scene.

If the *mysentery* be the seat of *Scrophula*, the same general process to suppuration, with symptoms a little deversified, takes place.—— In this disease there is often a perceptible hardness, and inequality of the abdomen, accompanied by a dull obtuse pain upon pressure.—— The same phænomena of *symptomatic fever*, are exhibited here, as in the other diversities of *Scrophula* ; and from the contiguity of the parts affected, a sympathetic stimulus is communicated to the intestinal canal, which either induces a tendency to, or very frequently excites a continued *diarrhæa*.— I have known mistakes of much seriousness committed by ascribing to the presence of *worms* confirmed cases of *mysenteric consumption*.—— One

melancholy instance of this kind I shall ever painfully remember :——A few years ago I visited an amiable young lady labouring under symptoms which I conceived to arise from a *deseased mysentery*. ——I advised the means which I deemed likely to afford relief.——Another *Physician* was consulted.——After some unavailing discussion of the characteristic symptoms of affections of the *mysentery*, and of the presence of *worms*; I was over-ruled,——and it was concluded that all her complaints were referrible to the existence of the latter disease ;——*worm medicines* were accordingly administered ;——the distressing *diarrhæa*, under which the lovely sufferer had long laboured, was much exaggerated, and she soon afterwards sunk into everlasting repose.——A subsequent dissection shewed the *mysentery* in a state of disease.

The impression, which the history of this case made upon my mind, has induced me to examine with much anxiety, into those minute circumstances, which may lead to a discrimination between an af-



fection of the *mysentery*, and the presence of *worms*.

—This is a decision of much importance ;—nor do I presume to put the matter beyond all doubt.——It is with much diffidence that I detail the result of my own observations.——I believe it very generally happens, when the *mysentery* is in a morbid state, that we meet with *glandular obstruction* in other parts of the body, or with symptoms strongly indicative of a *scrophulous habit*. I have observed an enlargement of the abdomen, both in *mysenteric affections*, and in cases of *worms*; but in the former disease I have observed an inequality of the surface of the abdomen perceptible, and very often painful, to the touch.——In *worm* cases, the appetite is sometimes diminished, but more frequently it is voraciously encreased ; in *mysenteric affections*, the appetite tho' not uniform, does not exhibit any very striking variation.——In the latter disease, I have observed, a regular, well marked debilitating *symptomatic fever* ; in the former disease, if *fever* make its approach, it assumes the type of a *fever* arising from cold, dentition, or any cause productive of irritability.——In both diseases, there is much irregularity in the state of the

bowels ; but where there is a morbid affection of the *mysentery*, the tendency to *diarrhæa* is more constant, than from the presence of *worms* :—the nature and colour of the [evacuations too, are widely different ;—in *mysenteric cases*, from the aliment mixing with the natural mucus, and from the *lacteal vessels* being rendered incapable of absorbing this combination, much of the nutritious part of the food is passed off, and for the most exhibits fæces of a pale, clay colour ;—the alvine discharge in *worm cases*, is very variable in point of colour, and is very generally slimy.——In cases of a *morbid affection of the mysentery*, the urine is almost constantly high coloured ;—in *worm cases* it is often limpid and frequently approaches to white.——*Dr. Home* has observed that a swelling of the *alæ narium* and upper lip is a certain diagnostic of *worms* ; and I am of opinion, that if those appearances be combined with some of the other prominent symptoms, they will infallibly prove the presence of this disease.—In *mysenteric consumption* there is an undescribable anguish apparent in the countenance, in cases of *worms* the visage is heavy and dull, and there is present that

general listlessness of frame, and a want of that sprightliness of face so natural to children.

I shall conclude the history of *Scrophula* by observing, that unless the disease be obviated at an early period of life, there is good ground for supposing that it will eventually attack the lungs, and very certainly induce that disease, of which, in pursuance of my design I am now to treat.

*Pulmonary Consumption* has been so often described, that its prominent features may be easily recognized by the most superficial observer; but if it be true that eighty thousand of the inhabitants of this island, perish annually by this disease, I am persuaded, that any additional research, which may lead to the successful application of curative powers, is an object of high consideration indeed.

The character given to *Pulmonary Consumption*, by a late celebrated nosologist, is strikingly correct, and is as follows, “ *Corporis emaciation, et debilitas, cum tussi, febre hectica, et ple-*



"rumque expectoratione purulenta."——This disease very often makes its approach imperceptibly; and it frequently makes very serious advances indeed, before the patient himself is at all suspicious of his situation.——When *Consumption* arises from tubercles, (which I think it does in a great majority of cases) it is characterized by a short, tickling, hollow cough; by a slight dyspnoea; and by an indistinct, feeble, quick pulse;—the two last symptoms are much increased by bodily exertion, more especially towards the evening.—The patient now experiences a heat, and dryness of the palms of the hands; and he is assailed by an uneasiness in one side, very frequently the left.—He generally sleeps upon the diseased side, for if he attempt to lie on the other, he feels an unaccountable restlessness, accompanied by a teizing cough, and sometimes by a sense of suffocation.—In bed his respiration is particularly laborious,—his sleep is disturbed, and he is tormented by disagreeable dreams,—he is not refreshed by his slumbers; but awakes under the influence of a general lassitude, with a profuse moisture upon his forehead, neck, and chest.—

That languor which he awoke with in the morning, he continues to experience more or less during the day,—he complains of faintness, head ach, and occasional sickness at stomach,—he is repeatedly seized with slight rigors, succeeded by flushings of heat, which exhibit a constant change of the colour of his face,—his appetite still remains not very materially impaired, tho' a relaxation of the muscular fibre, and a considerable degree of emaciation, are now very perceptible,—at the approach of noon and night he complains most of thirst; and at those periods his cough is much exasperated;—this stage of the disease is often little attended to, and frequently passes over before any practitioner of medicine is consulted;—the patient now experiences an aggravation of all the symptoms already enumerated, his cough is more vexatious, and is attended by an expectoration of white froth, which in the morning assumes the consistence of tough phlegm, of a salt, and sometimes sweet taste,—the velocity of the circulation continues,—the strokes of the artery are more strong and full; and succeed each other in such a manner, as to give the me-

dical attendant a clear persuasion, that the blood is transmitted thro' the lungs with much difficulty :—the patient is now more frequently assailed by recurring rigors, and the succeeding phænomena of fever ; nor does he obtain any compleat solution of it, either by sweating or any other evacuation :—his thirst is increased :—his difficulty of breathing is now a very distressing symptom ; and is generally accompanied by an acute pain in the thorax, or in one side,—if he now make an attempt to lie down on the sound side, the sense of suffocation which he experiences, and the incessant cough which immediately ensues, preclude the possibility of his enjoying one moment's repose :—his appetite is much diminished, and his bowels exhibit a tendency to constipation :—the waste of muscular fibre, becomes every day more apparent, and he approaches rapidly to the last stage of the disease.——It is remarkable, however, that neither at this, nor at any subsequent period of *Pulmonary Consumption*, does he entertain any terrors about the issue of the disease,—he seldom complains but of his cough,—he is supported by the idea, that if it could be removed,



he should be well,---and this cheering hope remains with him almost to the last hours of his existence.——In addition to the symptoms embraced by the foregoing description, he now labors under a purulent expectoration, occasionally mixed with blood,---he experiences a regular exacerbation of the symptomatic fever towards twelve at noon, and the same hour at midnight,---he feels however, a considerable remission about four or five o'clock in the afternoon, and a more complete solution of the fever, by a partially profuse perspiration, about the same hours in the morning,---his loss of strength and muscle are every day more apparent,——his difficulty of breathing, however, is not much increased, nor are the pains in his thorax or side, so frequent or so violent as in the preceeding stages of the disease,——a considerable portion of the matter, which he expectorates, generally sinks in water; tho' this circumstance is by no means an infallible proof of the presence of *pus*; since *pus*, and *mucus* exhibit phænomena according as they are freed from, or connected with air,——he has now less

substantia est.——E

thirst; and his appetite is not much diminished;—he is, twice a day, under the influence of an exacerbation of the symptomatic fever,—and he is as often under the operation of an effort to accomplish a solution of the fever by the skin or bowels,—he is consumed by the wasting discharges of perspiration and diarrhœa, alternating with each other,—his tongue becomes more clean, with streaks of white furr interspersed upon it;—his thirst is still less oppressive;—the white part of his eyes assumes a beautiful, bright, pearly appearance; and there is a very considerable dilatation of the pupils;—this last symptom is a very certain characteristic of the presence of *Pulmonary Consumption*.—At a preceding period of the disease, and more especially at this, he exhibits a circumscribed blush upon one, and sometimes upon both cheeks, particularly after taking food, or after a little repose,—his expectoration increases in quantity, and becomes extremely offensive,—from the shrinking of his muscles, there appears a greater fulness of the vascular system,—his nails assume a crooked form, and bend inwards; and his hairs begin to fall off,—he complains

much of an uneasiness, sometimes of a violent pain, in his legs, and in the soles of his feet,——his ancles become œdematous,——his wasting discharges, continue to encrease,——painful aphthæ of the tongue and mouth, with a slight eruption upon the lips, assail the sufferer about a week or ten days previous to the final catastrophe, which is wound up by an increase of fever, and by the supervention of delirium.

Those which I have described, are I think, the most regular and constant phænomena attending the progress and termination of *Pulmonary Consumption*.

That *Pulmonary Consumption* may arise from *Hemoptysis*, *Catarrh*, *Pneumonia*, *Asthma*, &c. I do not deny;——but I am persuaded, that a combination of all other supposed causes of the disease, bears an infinitely small proportion to the number of cases constituted by the presence of *Tubercles*. A person with a long neck, narrow chest, florid countenance, and delicate skin, is described as being the most subject to *Hemoptysis*;



it is also strikingly true, that this identical habit is pointed out, as the most liable to *Scrophula*;—I am therefore prepared to expect similar diseases in habits similarly formed.—If *Hemoptysis*, without being attached to a habit supposed to be scrophulous, did generally produce *Pulmonary Consumption*, we should find Consumption almost constantly succeeding to injuries done to the lungs;—that this is not the case, I need only appeal to the experience of army surgeons; and their evidence will go to prove, that wounds in the lungs, whether inflicted by the point of a bayonet, or by a musket-ball, seldom, or never terminate in *Pulmonary Consumption*. Upon this subject, *Dr. Rush*, in his *Medical Enquiries*, furnishes a testimony remarkably strong.—He says, “that he met a British officer a few days after the battle of Brandywine, who informed him, that the surgeon-general of the royal army, had assured him, that out of twenty-four soldiers, who had been admitted into the hospitals, during the campaign of 1776, with wounds in their lungs, twenty-three had recovered.”

Respecting the supposed operation of *Catarrh* and *Pneumonia*, in the production of *Pulmonary Consumption*, I shall only observe, that, I cannot conceive a more violent inflammation of the lungs to be induced by *Catarrh* or *Pneumonia*, than that, which I suppose may arise from a ball or a bayonet piercing through the substance of that organ; and if it be true that *Pulmonary Consumption* seldom, or never follows the injury caused by these bodies,—I think it improbable that the disease should be produced by an injury comparatively trifling, unless such injury be applied to a habit predisposed to *Pulmonary Consumption*.——This I know, that an extensive practice in *Pulmonary Affections*, for a period of twelve years, has brought before me, very few cases indeed, of *Catarrh* or *Pneumonia* terminating in Consumption.

Respecting the influence of *Asthma* in the production of *Pulmonary Consumption*, I shall only remark, that this disease, and *Asthma* are generally observed, to make their attacks, the former, at an early, the latter, at an advanced period of

life.——Besides, *Asthma*, is most frequently a *Spasmodic* disease, and will sometimes yield to the administration of *Antispasmodic* remedies ;—but upon the supposition that the means employed afford no relief, yet *Asthma* will continue for many years, without ever exhibiting a symptom of *Pulmonary Consumption* ;—I observe further, that the *Hooping Cough*, which is a very severe *Pulmonary Affection*, seldom or ever terminates in *Pulmonary Consumption*.

In short, I am fully persuaded, by the most irresistible evidence, that an immense majority of cases of *Pulmonary Consumption* originate in *Tubercles*, and that those *Tubercles*, are exclusively confined to scrophulous habits.

I have given a history of the more obvious phænomena of *Pulmonary Consumption* ; I shall now attempt to establish an analogy between the *Scrophulous* and *Consumptive* habit.——It is certainly true, that the connexion between those two habits is so striking, that it has uniformly forced itself upon the notice of every author, who



has described them,—for if we select any nosological writer, and compare his definition of *scrophula* and *pulmonary consumption*,—and his delineation of the habits which are most liable to be affected by those diseases,—we shall find, that without any intention on his part to establish an analogy, he has exhibited similar characteristics of, and described similar habits, as those most liable to, *scrophula* and *pulmonary consumption*.

In support of this position, I need only appeal to the testimony of a writer, whose accuracy of observation was never questioned;—the opinion of the late celebrated *Cullen*, upon this subject, I conceive to be decisive, in as much as it was founded not upon any preconceived analogy between *scrophula* and *pulmonary consumption*;—nor upon any design which he had entertained of making a useful deduction, by the application of similar powers in the cure of both diseases;—yet the professor describes, in words almost precisely the same, the habits, upon which he says, *Scrophula* and *pulmonary consumption* make their attack.—I need not insert a quotation from *Dr. Cullen*,—his works are in the hands of every one.

The analogy is further established by the testimony of every writer upon the subject, who has delineated the identical habits, which are most liable to *scrophula* and *pulmonary consumption*.—Those opinions are also confirmed by the experience of the author of this essay.—I have resided for many years, in the midst of a populous, manufacturing country, where both diseases are extremely prevalent, and I can scarcely furnish a case of Pulmonary Consumption, which could not be traced to an origin strongly characteristic of a scrophulous habit.

I have observed that *Scrophula* generally makes its appearance at an early age ;—and that *pulmonary consumption* assails at a later period of life ; this difference in the time of their attack, is not, I think, subversive of the supposition of an analogy between the two diseases ; for I am of opinion, that *pulmonary consumption* is merely a more advanced stage of *Scrophula* ; or in the words of an intelligent writer, is, “ *Scrophula* in maturity,” affecting an organ necessary to life.—If symptoms of *Scrophula* be exhibited in child-

hood ; and if we trace the history of a number of such cases to a certain period of life, I am convinced that we shall find a very great proportion of them fall a prey to the ravages of *Pulmonary Consumption*. This will very certainly happen, if the event be not obviated, either by the preventive operation of bracing powers, or by an acquisition of a rigidity of muscular fibre about the period of manhood.

Upon this subject my experience has been so uniform, that I have been led by it, to expect, at a certain age, the approach of *Pulmonary Consumption* ; or to meet with a partial or total disappearance of the most urgent symptoms of *Scrophula*.

I shall now attempt to bring into view some of the powers, which have been, and which may be employed to alleviate palliatively, or radically, the diseases of *Scrophula* and *Pulmonary Consumption*. I enter upon this part of my essay with much diffidence ;—the task is an important



one ;—the attempts which have hitherto been made, to obviate the general prevalence, and eventual fatality of those diseases, have certainly been fruitless :—A very great proportion of that accumulated mass of misery, which I daily witness, arises from the approaches of *Scrophula*, and the ravages of *Pulmonary Consumption* ;——I am therefore ambitious to palliate or to remove the increasing evil,—if I fail in the establishment of means, which shall be uniform and certain in their operation, I trust that by this discussion, a more general attention will be directed to a subject of high consideration to the interests of humanity.

The several stages of *Obstruction*, *Inflammation* and *Suppuration*, will perhaps, embrace every form, under which *Scrophula* generally appears.—Previous, however, to my treating of the means to be employed for the cure of the disease, when properly formed, I shall make a few observations relative to the powers, which I would recommend with a view to obviate, what I conceive to be, the general predisposing cause.

The management of children in their early infancy, is a task of the first importance.—the formation of their habits is, perhaps, completely in the power of those who have the care of them; and I am persuaded that the seeds of future health, or future disease, may be sown by those who are the superintendants of their tender years.—the usual food of children is light, cooling and nutritious :—this is as it should be ;—and in my opinion, their desires should regulate the time of eating, and the quantity.——It must have occurred to the most superficial observer, that the children of the opulent are frequently feeble and sickly ; and that the offspring of the peasant are healthy and strong ;—this fact needs no comment ;—it is exclusively referrible to the very different modes of treatment adopted by the one and the other.—Children should be sent out very constantly into the open air ; and instead of lolling in the arms of their nurses, they should be encouraged as early, and as often as possible, to partake of every exercise, which will bring their little muscles into action ;—those exercises are various, and will readily occur to every one.——In addition to this salu-

tary regimen, I would recommend an early, diligent and constant application of the invigorating powers of immersion in elementary water.—I am persuaded that the regular practice of bathing children, under proper limitations, will be attended with the most happy effects.—I have long employed the *tepid, temperate* and *cold baths* ; and by accommodating the temperature of the water, to the condition of health, and to the age of my patients, I have generally been able to impart vigour to the muscular fibre.—Warranted by an extensive experience, I can recommend bathing, under judicious management, as the most effectual power, in obviating the debility of childhood, and in preventing the approach of those diseases, which make the subject of this essay.

Every one imagines himself capable of pointing out the particular cases, in which the practice of bathing is admissible ; and therefore practitioners have much to do before they can make its application generally useful.—A mass of preconceived opinion, and fixed prejudice must be cleared away ; otherwise the use of the bath, will



be subjected to such restrictions, and to such interruptions, as to preclude the idea of any permanent benefit likely to be derived from it.—

If an infant labour under a slight *diarrhæa*, I am accustomed to hear bathing prohibited, and without any satisfactory reason; for I know that, the application of water, (of a due temperature) is a very effectual remedy, in this disease; whether it arises from any irritating cause in the intestinal tube, or whether it proceeds from a symptomatic affection of, or a general debility in, the bowels themselves.

It is usual, also, to forbid the use of bathing, when a child exhibits symptoms of *dentition*;—from much observation, I am persuaded, that the application of water, heated to a proper degree, will alleviate the convulsive spasms,—that it will lessen the irritability of the habit,—and that it will have a tendency to prevent the recurrence of fever, *diarrhæa*, and other complaints connected with this operation.

Again, during that vexatious, and sometimes long protracted disease, the *hooping-cough*, it is, common to forbid immersion in water.——I believe that nothing can be more injudicious than this prohibition ; for I am persuaded, that after the primary stage is gone over, there is not a more safe, speedy and effectual method of removing this convulsive disease, than by the prudent, and continued application of the temperate bath.—A case occurred some years ago, which very nearly interested my feelings :—the child had laboured under a severe form of the *hooping-cough* for several months, and during the winter season :—the most approved remedies were fruitlessly tried :—I had recourse to the *temperate bath*, and in less than three weeks all her complaints were removed.——Children are always averse to the use of much medicine ; and if they would take it,—do we know of any power which approximates to a specific in any of the stages of *hooping-cough* ? We certainly do not.——In short, I am of opinion, that in most of the diseases incident to children, the continued application of water, may be adopted with much advantage.—

The bath may be graduated, according to the judgment of the prescriber, from the greatest degree of heat proper, down to the usual temperature of elementary water.——I have thus given the result of my experience relative to the salutary practice of bathing;—and I have found it well calculated to obviate many of the evils which spring from a debilitated habit:——I am also of opinion that it is the most powerful preventive of the diseases under discussion.——I shall suppose, however, that all the effective means of prevention have been neglected; and that I am to prescribe to the *obstructive* stage of *Scrophula*.——This form of the disease is delineated in a former part of this essay; and to obviate it, I have had recourse to a variety of remedies variously combined.——I have employed *Calomel*, *Antimony*, *Digitalis*, *Hemlock*, *Opium*, *Colts-foot*, *Steel*, *Muriated Barytes*, *Nitrous Acid*, *Burnt-Sponge*, *Bathing*, &c. &c.

In recent cases of *obstruction*, I have administered small doses of *Calomel*; and when there appears in the gland a tendency to *inflammation*,



I have, I think, with advantage combined *Calomel*, and *Tartarized Antimony*;—during the future progress of the disease, when there is much irritation, or when there are deep seated affections of the joints, I have seen beneficial effects produced by the addition of *Opium*.——In every stage of the disease I regulate the action of the heart by the sedative powers of *Digitalis*;——I have exhibited *Hemlock* in every form of *Scrophula*; and altho' I have kept my patients under its influence for several months, so as to be able to give it in enormous doses, yet I never saw it effect the least alleviation of symptoms.——I am now completely satisfied of the correctness of this fact:—my opinion upon the subject, however, was formed with caution, in as much as *Hemlock* stood highly recommended by characters of much professional celebrity.——*Burnt Sponge*, *Colts-foot*, *Steel*, and a variety of preparations of the class of *deobstruents*, have been tryed, and have severally deceived me.——I have also administered *Muriated Barytes*, and the *Nitrous Acid*;—they will be found to increase the appetite; and to

impart vigour to the system; but I never saw them exhibit any strikingly beneficial effect on the morbid glands.

Those are some of the most prominent general remedies which I have employed to remove the *obstructive* stage of *Scrophula*; but of all the means which I have tried, immersion in water claims the first place:—In the stages of *obstruction* and *ulceration*, I have for many years witnessed its efficacy; more especially if persisted in for a number of weeks or months;—and here I beg leave to call the attention of medical men to the powers of

#### ILKLEY SPAW,

which has maintained its credit almost since the commencement of the present century, on account of the virtues which it has displayed in the cure of *Scrophula*. By what means it first excited public attention, I know not; but without the sanction of any medical writer, it has uniformly forced itself upon the notice of all descriptions of people in its vicinity, who labour under the

influence of *Scrophula*.—They resort to it with the fullest conviction of its curative powers, and they are seldom disappointed of its beneficial effects.——A respectable clergyman, long a resident at ILKLEY, informed me, “that he never “knew a *scrophulous* patient give the waters of “that place a fair trial, without either experience- “ing benefit approximating to a cure, or being “materially relieved.”

The village of ILKLEY is situated upon the high road from York to Lancaster, upon the river Wharfe.——The spring, which has given celebrity to the place, issues from the side of a hill about half a mile from the village, and flows not less than thirty gallons in the minute. It was first inclosed by the late M. Middleton Esqr. and it has since been accommodated with baths, dressing-rooms, &c. by the present lord of the manor.——The prospect from the spring has ever excited the admiration of strangers; —it exhibits the various scenery of a fine meandering river,—an interspersion of woods,—beautiful villas,—and magnificent rocks.



The reputation of ILKLEY-WELL, in the cure of a complaint, for which I was daily consulted, and which admitted of so little relief by other means, necessarily attracted my attention.—— I visited the spring, and I examined it by all the tests used in the analysis of water;——the result of my experiments convinced me, that it contained the least extraneous matter, of any water hitherto described ; and that its salutary qualities reside exclusively, in the remarkable coldness, softness, and purity of the element.—— It has been very generally visited, and very often analysed by medical men and others ; but, being previously assured of its great efficacy,—— and having begun their experiments under the impression that this efficacy sprung from the circumstance of the water being strongly impregnated with some vegetable or mineral substance ; ——and not being able to detect any such impregnation, they have uniformly been discouraged, and have abandoned the pursuit.——The water when poured into a glass, is remarkably clear, bright, and sparkling ; and from its extreme purity and softness, it is perhaps calculated to en-

ter, those minute vessels of the animal frame, which are impervious to other fluids.—A very large quantity of the water may be drank, even immediately before dinner, without seeming to distend the stomach, and without in the smallest degree, impairing the appetite —I have myself, made this experiment, without perceiving any effect, except its almost immediate and powerful operation as a diuretic.

I could here adduce a very great number of cases in proof of its extraordinary efficacy in the cure of *Scrophula* and symptoms connected with it; but as this detail would exceed the limits which I have prescribed to this essay,—I shall only observe, that, in addition to its efficient powers in obviating the phænomena attached to the first and last stages of *Scrophula*, it is certainly well calculated to operate as a preventive in habits predisposed to this disease.

I shall now bring forward a few of the *local* remedies which I have applied, with a view to the discussion of superficial glandular tumors.

—I have frequently employed, and I think, with advantage, the *Emplastrum Lithargyri cum Hydrargyro*, and the *Emplastrum Saponis*. When the tumors were considerably indurated, I have recommended the *Emplastrum Ammoniaci cum Hydrargyro*.

Bleeding with *Leeches*, is a local remedy too, which I have employed with much success.— I shall not enter into any discussion relative to their action, but from long experience, I am well persuaded, that, in all cases of glandular swelling, or obstruction, whether of the *Scrophulous* kind, or those approximating to a *Schirrhous* or *Cancerous* affection, this practice will be attended with the most happy effects. I have repeated the application once or twice a week, according to the nature, situation, and extent of the tumor.

Another local remedy which I have employed, is the *spouting of water*, of different temperatures, upon the enlarged gland. I have generally prescribed the temperature of the water to be about eighty.



two degrees of Fareinheit's thermometer ; and I have recommended it to be gradually reduced to the most extreme degree of cold.—The operation of *spouting* may be continued as long as the patient can bear it with ease, and it may be repeated at the discretion of the medical attendant.—I imagine that it will operate more powerfully as a discutient, if it be recurred to immediately after the bleeding with Leeches.

I believe also that *Æther* and some of the *volatile Spirits*, if regularly applied to an obstructed gland, will very frequently produce resolvent effects ;—and I have seen the most essential service performed, by passing thro' the gland slight shocks of *Electricity*. I have known this experiment instantaneously succeed in the removal of tumors of long standing.—Much caution, however, I apprehend, is necessary in the application of this potent machinery ; for the stimulus may be so considerable, as to induce inflammation ; which phænomenon, in *scrophulous* habits, very generally indeed, terminates in the formation of matter.

I am particularly attentive to the curative part of the first stage of *Scrophula*; for I consider it an object much to be desired, that we should arrest the progress of the disease at this period;—I will, however, suppose that this attempt has been found impracticable; and that the tumor exhibits those appearances which I have described as characteristics of *Inflammation*. At this period, I think, I have afforded much relief by a combination of *Calomel*, *Digitalis*, *Tartarized Antimony*, and *Opium*.—I have prescribed those remedies in various proportions; but I do not think it proper here to fix the exact quantity of each, which may be administered.—I conceive that this should always be left to the judgment of the practitioner; and that the proper dose of every medicine is just what will produce the desired effect.

The *local* remedies which I have employed, are lotions of *Aqua Ammoniacæ Acetata*, or *Aqua Lithargyri Acetata*.—A solution of the *Inflammation* may be thus attempted; and all the means recommended in the first stage of the disease,

are to be suspended, except the application of leeches ; those may be employed during the whole of this period with much advantage.—If after all, however, the tumor should progressively point to *Suppuration* ; which may be detected by its throbbing, greater discoloration, softer consistence, less pain, and by a fluctuation of matter obscurely felt ;—I would then immediately prescribe those means, which I think, ought to be strictly persevered in, during the *ulcerative process*, so as to attempt to cure the disease.

Altho' every idea of discussing the tumor be now abandoned, yet I would not, by any application of a suppurative tendency, hasten the progress of this stage ; for I have often known matter, even in considerable quantity, unexpectedly disappear. Again, if during the suppurative process, the patient do not materially suffer by the supervention of a symptomatic fever ; or the matter be so deep-seated as to endanger the osseous parts, or some important organ, I would by no means recommend a hasty use of the lancet.—Upon a supposition, however, of any mischief likely to be occasioned by delaying the operation, I would



certainly recommend an immediate discharge of the matter.—this discharge, may be very safely, and very properly, I think, effected, by a method practised by surgeons of much professional celebrity,—an oblique incision may be made under the external integuments, which shall extend superficially to a small distance, and then by giving the instrument a perpendicular direction, it may be plunged into the body of the tumor.—A discharge will thus be given to the matter, and at the same time the air will be effectually excluded.——It has been further recommended, and, I think, with much propriety, to evacuate a certain portion of the matter at first, and as the integuments seem to recover their contractility and tone, to repeat the operation till the whole be discharged :——When this has been accomplished, the parts forming the cavity of the tumor may be kept in close contact by means of adhesive plaisters, or tight rollers,—and thus give the chance of a permanent union being formed.

I have known this experiment fail ; and I have seen gently stimulating injections used with a view to promote an action which might lead to an adhesion of the parts ; it generally happens, however, that this practice will produce extraordinary irritation, without being followed by any beneficial effect.

I have also recommended the matter to be discharged by means of a *Seton*, and I have seen this method attended by the most complete success.

In either case, as soon as a discharge is given to the matter, the irritability of the habit, and the increase of vascular action, must be obviated by keeping the system strictly under the influence of *Digitalis* ; and in addition to this practice, I would recommend the *Bark* of the *Cinchona* in large and repeated doses :—I have also given the *Muriated Barytes*, and I have uniformly enjoined the use of the *temperate*, or *cold Bath*. —To a *scrophulous* ulcer, the dressings may be varied, at the discretion of the surgeon ;—there

will be little difficulty, however, in healing a *scrophulous* ulcer, if the irritability of the habit, and the general debility of the system, be obviated by the means already proposed.

I have thus attempted to trace the history of a morbid gland.——I am aware that there are peculiarities which I have not noticed; but I am persuaded that the treatment which I have recommended will be found to apply to the ordinary phenomena of *Scrophula*. If the osseous parts be affected, they must eventually be removed.

In concluding my observations upon the *general* and *local* remedies to be employed in the cure of *Scrophula*, it is proper, perhaps, that I should notice *scrophulous Ophthalmia*. In this form of the disease, in addition to the powers which I have recommended to lessen the irritability of the system, and to give tone, I would advise, as an application, the *Unguentum Hydrargyri Nitrati*;——and the continued use of *Elec-*



*tricity.* A combination of those means judiciously applied will very generally afford relief.

After this exhibition of the remedies which I have found most successful in obviating the various appearances of *Scrophula* ; I now proceed to the treatment of *Pulmonary Consumption*.

I conceive tubercles in the lungs to be the general cause of this disease ; and were it practicable to attack a tubercle locally, I would treat it in the same manner, as I would a morbid gland situated in any part of the system.—The origin of tubercles is involved in much obscurity, and the approaches of *Pulmonary Consumption* referrible to their presence, are often so insidious, as scarcely to command the attention of the patient himself ; but, if medical aid be solicited at an early period, I would advise, as in the primary stage of *Scrophula*, the use of resolvent remedies.

To alleviate the urgency of symptoms, which generally prevail in this, and in some of the sub-

sequent stages of *Pulmonary Disease*, recourse has been had to *general bleeding*. I know that this practice will afford temporary relief; but I am well persuaded, from an ample experience, that its uniform tendency, is to fix the disease, and to render it incurable. The use of repeated bleedings, followed up by a regimen strictly antiphlogistic, have hitherto constituted the sum of the most approved practice, in the commencement of *Pulmonary Consumption*.——I need only appeal to universal experience for a proof of its inutility.——Local bleeding is less exceptionable, and may, I think, in some cases, be employed with advantage.

In this, and indeed in almost every stage of the disease, I have administered *Hemlock* without any apparent benefit. I have also prescribed a variety of *Mucilaginous Emollients*, with a view to diminish general irritability, and to appease the cough; and by their means I have occasionally obtained an alleviation of symptoms; but this temporary benefit has been more than counter-balanced by their materially affecting the powers of digestion.

In short, I have tried almost every remedy recommended by authors in this stage of the disease, and they have all disappointed me. Many of them are, I think, manifestly injurious.

How the absorption of *Cantharides*, acts upon a tubercle in the lungs, I know not ; but I am satisfied that the repeated application of *Blisters* to the *Thorax*, is a very valuable remedy in the commencement of *Pulmonary diseases* ; and I prefer a repetition of the blisters to the painful method of keeping them open, and discharging for a length of time.—At this period, and I think, in every stage of *Consumption*, the patient's food should be easy of digestion, and at the same time nutritious. Eggs, broths, and milk variously prepared, are of this description ; and should with animal food, constitute the principal part of his diet.—A cordial regimen, I think highly improper ; it never imparts vigour to the muscular fibre ;—and its tendency at this period, is to encrease the velocity of the circulating mass, to confirm irremediably the ob-



structive stage of the tubercle, and to impel it to inflammation.

During this, and every subsequent stage of *Consumption*, I have administered *Anodynes* combined with *Mucilages* and *Squills*; and by their exhibition I have alleviated some of the most distressing symptoms.—They are of no further use.

*Riding on Horseback* has been strongly recommended, as a salutary exercise in *Pulmonary Consumption*. As this practice was sanctioned by names of the very first celebrity, I continued, for several years, to recommend it to every consumptive patient who consulted me.—I have advised riding in all stages of the disease, and at those times of the day, which were the most remote from the expected exacerbation of fever.—its effects have uniformly been injurious.—I have no doubt of this fact,—since it is founded upon much observation, and a very long experience :—the exposure of a consumptive patient to a damp or chill atmosphere, constantly excites in his chest,

additional irritation; and if he rides when the weather is warm and dry, I have found the symptomatic fever regularly increased by the exercise:—in all cases, and under all circumstances it induces a general lassitude, and adds to the debility of his whole frame.—If he be asked how he feels himself after a ride? he will reply, that when on horseback his cough gave him little uneasiness, and that he felt himself tolerably well; but that when he had finished his ride, he experienced an extreme degree of languor and fatigue.—His pulse will be found much increased in point of frequency; and he is generally unable to sit up any part of the remainder of the day. In short, I am well convinced that riding on horseback, or any other species of exercise, which requires much exertion on the part of the patient, thereby accelerating the transmission of the blood thro' the lungs,—will uniformly do mischief in *Pulmonary Consumption*. The *Abstraction of fluids* from a consumptive patient, or at least a strict limitation in point of quantity, has been proposed as part of the curative process in the disease:—And I am decidedly

of opinion that a little more attention to this practice, is an object of high consideration indeed.—It was suggested, a few years ago ; but as far as I know, it has never been generally adopted ; nor has it acquired the reputation, which, I think, it deserves.—To keep the lungs in a state removed as much as possible from every cause of irritation, is, in my mind, a primary indication of cure in all affections of that organ. If an ulcer be situated in any external part of the system, an easy and still position is strictly enjoined, as being the most conducive to complete a cure ;—and I am well persuaded, that this practice may be applied with much advantage to *Pulmonary Ulceration*. There can be no doubt that any given proportion of fluid taken into the circulating mass, will occasion more or less, a temporary repletion :—the effect of this, in *Pulmonary Consumption*, is manifestly injurious, in as much as it very constantly increases the irritation, and produces an exacerbation of the symptomatic fever. There are a variety of means, which may be effectually



employed to obviate the thirst of the patient, without indulging him in the immoderate use of fluids.

The reputed efficacy of *Emetics* in promoting absorption, has induced medical men to repeat them at almost every period of *Pulmonary Consumption*. I am inclined to believe, however, that the exhibition of *Emetics* will be found to be injurious, if they have for their basis preparations either of *Antimony* or *Ipecacuanha*.—I have often witnessed the effects of *Emetics* of this description; and I am convinced that their tendency has been, more especially to weaken the stomach; and by increasing all the wasting discharges, to impair the vigour of the whole system, without alleviating materially any of the symptoms connected with the disease.

The practice of *Swinging* has been recommended by high authority:—it is a sufficiently gentle exercise, but like every other, as it quickens the circulation, I think it will be found unbeneficial in its application.—I have known con-

sumptive patients continue its use for several weeks without any apparent relief:——of every other mode of exercise, it is, however, perhaps the least exceptionable.

*Sea Voyages*, and a warm *Climate*, have also been recommended; and there may be living testimonies of their salutary influence; so there are insulated cases of recovery, from *Pulmonary Consumption* in all circumstances, and situations. A few years ago, I attended a young man in the very last stage of *Phthisis Pulmonalis*. I prescribed to him, *Vitriolated Iron*, and the *Bark* of the *Cinchona*;——to smoothe the passage he had recourse to *Anodynes*; an abcess formed in his thigh, and he recovered:——this fortunate termination of the disease could not be ascribed to the remedies which were employed; for I have often administered the *Bark* of the *Cinchona* and *Vitriolated Iron*, without being able to afford the smallest relief.——It is unquestionably true, that the phthisical patients who have been sent to *Madiera*, *Portugal*, *France*, *Italy*, &c. have almost

all perished.—I am supported, in this assertion, by the concurrent testimony of foreign practioners.

Of late years I have tried the *Muriated Barytes*, and the *Nitrous Acid*, in *Pulmonary Consumption*.—Their effects are, I think, very similar; they are both, in my opinion, excellent auxiliaries in the cure of the disease:—they quench thirst;—they give tone to the stomach; and they certainly do not increase the velocity of the circulation,

In all cases of violent dyspnæa, or of extreme irritability in the chest, I have recommended the *Vapour of Vitriolic Æther variously impregnated*,<sup>4</sup> and with singular success.——I have along with the *Æther*, employed, several of the *Balsams*, *Cicuta*, &c. &c. but I am not sure that the quality of the application, is at all improved by the addition of any of those substances.——I have lately prescribed *Digitalis*, to be inhaled with the vapour of *Æther*; but my experience is yet too narrow to say any thing decisive relative to its effects.——I am strongly inclined to believe,



however, that the local application of *Digitalis*, to ulcerated lungs, will lead to important consequences.——It is a rich subject of inquiry.

The *Hectic* or *symptomatic fever*, which so constantly attends *Pulmonary Consumption*, has been ascribed to various causes.——I shall not enquire whether it arises from an absorption of pus, from an increased irritability of the system, or from the prevention of a regular supply of chyle;—I shall only observe, that if any method can be adopted to manage this fever, there is a very strong probability, that we shall be able to cure the disease.——As the *Symptomatic fever* has been found to admit of two remissions in the space of twenty-four hours,—I have administered some of the light tonics, during those remissions; but I believe that little can be achieved in this way; for the remissions are by no means either so perfect, or so permanent as to allow of bracing remedies being thrown in, in any quantity:——besides, I think, I have seen the succeeding exacerbation of fever, considerably increased by the exhibition of the powers

just now mentioned.——In short I am convinced that nothing is to be done, by attempting to establish some degree of analogy, between the remission of a *Hectic*, and that of an *Intermittent fever*.

As I have already observed, a *Hectic* fever generally exhibits two exacerbations, and the same number of subsequent remissions, in twenty-four hours.——The paroxysm at noon is slight, and there is only a slight remission :——the evening paroxysm is strong, and there follows a proportional remission :——the cause of the regular increase of fever, at two stated periods, every twenty-four hours, is, I think, involved in much obscurity ; but I believe that the subsequent phænomena, are efforts of some principle in the animal œconomy, to recover a healthy state ;—accordingly, I find the remissions of fever characterized either by a *partially profuse perspiration*, or by an attack of *diarrhœa* ; and I observe those different states of the system alternating with each other, till the emaciated sufferer sink under their consuming influence. If

astringents be employed to keep the bowels in check, the discharge by the skin is enormously increased ; if on the contrary, an attempt be made, to repel this discharge, there will be a recurrence of the diarrhæa. The morning perspiration which is generally the most profuse, has been attempted to be obviated, by ordering the patient out of bed previous to its approach :——I am persuaded, that nothing is to be gained by this practice ; for if the effect of the sweating stage be the solution of the fever, and if the perspiration be not suffered to flow, I know, from experience, that the fever will continue during the day with increased violence. This circumstance makes the patient very unable to sit up ; and if he lie down, he is sure to be assailed by an extreme degree of heat, terminating in the most profuse, debilitating perspiration.——I am convinced that this statement is correct ;—and that, unless I can arrest the very first phænomenon of the fever, I shall certainly do mischief if I interfere with it in any of its subsequent stages.——It has often occurred to me, that if vascular action could be permanently lessened, there would be no ne-



cessity, for the recurrence of those wasting discharges by the skin and bowels ; but as I knew of no power, by which I could safely, and effectually, regulate the motion of the heart, I was compelled to apply only to the effects.— With a view to keep in check every consuming evacuation, I for several years prescribed the *Vitriolic Solution*, recommended by *Dr. Moseley*, in dysentery. I advised the exhibition of this preparation, in nauseating doses, every morning ; and altho' I never could materially lessen the fever by it, I know that it has generally operated powerfully as a preventive of profuse discharges.—I found it certainly to increase the appetite, and to impart some degree of tone to the whole system :——It had also a beneficial effect in relieving dyspnæa, and in promoting a more free expectoration.

With the same intention, I administered small doses of *Calcined Zinc* ; but not, I think, with equal benefit.

I gave every popular remedy of *Consumption* a fair trial ; and I attended several cases, in which a noted *nostrum*, known by the name of “ Godbold’s Vegetable Syrup,” was exhibited regularly for many weeks ;——Like other pectoral syrups, it occasionally procured a temporary respite from the teasing cough which accompanies *Pulmonary Consumption* ; but I certainly never saw any permanent good obtained from its use.

I have now brought into view the most prominent powers which I have employed to afford relief, in a disease, which I found very generally fatal ;——for if ever I met with a case of recovery from genuine *Phthisis*, I am persuaded that such an event never was to be ascribed to any remedy which I administered.——My labours amounted to nothing more than an alleviation of symptoms :——in obviating the fatality of the disease, they were fruitless.

It appears then that no mode of treatment which I adopted, could do any thing more, than

operate in relieving the urgency of symptoms ; and I imagine that this will pretty generally accord with the experience of every practitioner.— If it be true, that I knew of no power which could effectually resist the ravages of *Pulmonary Consumption*, I ought not to entertain much veneration for my former practice. Upon any subject which admits of demonstrative evidence, or even that sort of testimony which approximates to a demonstration, it would be, perhaps, unwise to speculate by the introduction of new matter ; but I think there needs no apology for the subversion of a fabric unsupported by any thing solid, or applicable to any useful purpose. — If I have fairly appreciated the old mode of treating *Pulmonary Consumption*, there is very certainly no justifiable pretence for repelling the introduction of new ideas.

The *Digitalis* attracted my notice. I had prescribed this plant, occasionally, as a *diuretic*, during a period of twelve years. From the circumstance, however, (as I now believe) of little attention being paid either to its collection or



preparation, I seldom could perceive it to possess any striking hydragogue quality; nor did I ever witness any power which it exhibited over the motion of the heart. The testimonies of authors respecting it, were various and contradictory. I entered upon its use in the treatment of *Pulmonary Consumption*, without entertaining a hope that it could afford relief.—I was a complete sceptic relative to its efficacy; and the issue of the first cases in which I prescribed it, confirmed my unbelief;—my patients perished:—nor did they ever appear to be under its influence:—this last circumstance must have arisen either from the bad quality of the plant, or from my inexperience in its exhibition.—The unsuccessful cases, however, might be said to be lost, previous to the use of the *Digitalis*—I determined therefore to administer it in the primary stages of *Pulmonary Consumption*; and the result of my experience has much exceeded any effect which I could possibly expect, from the exhibition of this, or any other remedy.

Altho' *Digitalis* took its name, and was brought into notice, at so early a period as the middle of the fifteenth century; and altho' it has been mentioned by every writer on the *Materia Medica* since that time, yet it has never been admitted into general practice.—*Dr. Boerhaave* recommends its outward application, but he represents it as a plant too acrid for internal use. *Dr. Alston* speaks of it as a vegetable possessing very extraordinary powers; but he neither treats of the diseases, in the cure of which it is so efficient, nor of the mode of administering it. *Dr. Home* in his lectures classes it among the *Cathartica Drastica*, and barely notices its diuretic powers; but, in his “clinical experiments,” when he treats of diuretic remedies, he never mentions it all. *Dr. Withering* prescribed the *Digitalis* in 1775; and in 1779 he communicated to the Medical Society of Edinburgh, the result of his trials of it:—it was exhibited in the royal infirmary with success; and after being for many years banished from the Edinburgh Pharmacopeia, it again received a place in the edition of that work in 1783.

The plant itself is so well known that a particular description of it may be deemed unnecessary:—it is biennial, and grows very common in gravelly and uncultivated soils:—that which is gathered from barren, and elevated situations, I believe to be of the best quality; for it is certainly true, that all plants, more especially odorous ones, possess the greatest powers, if they be collected from situations much exposed to the influence of the sun.——If it be true, that the power of the *Digitalis* is resident in a *volatile, narcotic* quality; it will be found that that plant, which possesses the strongest flavor, is the most to be depended upon. The time of collecting it, the method of preparing it for use, and the mode of preserving it, are in my opinion, of the last importance; in as much as an inattention to those circumstances, will render it impossible for the prescriber to ascertain the proper dose to be administered. As I have already observed, I conceive the proper dose of a medicine, to be just that quantity, which will produce the desired effect; now, the proper dose of *Digitalis*, is what will, by gradually bringing



the system under its influence, retard the motion of the heart, so as to reduce the pulsations to a given number, and to accomplish this object without inducing any of its deleterious or injurious effects. This medium dose, could be very generally ascertained with much precision, were medical men to collect the plant in a healthy state, at one part of the year; and were they to be equally careful in powdering and in preserving it.—I do certainly believe that the *Digitalis* possesses its natural qualities in a greater or less degree, whenever, or wherever it be collected; but it is a matter of much difficulty to prescribe it with judgment, if it be collected indiscriminately, at all times of the year:—For in some cases a practitioner would be disappointed by not being able to place his patient sufficiently under its influence; and in other instances he might probably throw it in, in such quantity, as to endanger life.——That the plant is a hardy one, I have no doubt, and I believe that it may be exhibited with effect, at whatever period it be collected; for a very ingenious surgeon, *Mr. Waiblinger* of *Fulneck*, in the vicinity of this

place, assured me, that he had gone into his field in the midst of winter, and collected what he thought fit for his purpose ; and that, tho' gathered at this season of the year, and given in doses comparatively small, yet it exhibited all the symptoms expected from the plant in its most healthy state.—This happened so long ago as 1789.—But that every practitioner may be giving the same medicine, or at least a medicine of similar powers, I would propose that the leaves should be collected, from vigorous plants, in their flowering state, some time from the beginning of August to the latter end of September.—By this arrangement much inconvenience may be remedied, and fewer disappointments will occur in the use of the plant.

The method of drying the *Digitalis*, is perhaps, a matter of much importance ; for if its properties reside in a volatile principle attached to it, it is presumable, I think, that the application of a strong heat, will dissipate part of its power.—The plant may be suspended in a warm airy kitchen ; and when it is completely dried, it may be rubbed

between the hands, and the leaves may thus be detached from the stalks and ribs :—it may then be powdered for use ; and if any of the fibrous parts remain, they may be separated during the process of pulverization. A quantity which may be thought sufficient for the consumption of one year only, should be collected ; for it is very certain that it loses much of its power by being long kept :—I am of opinion, however, that the exhibition of the plant in this way, (even upon the supposition that much of its power be dissipated) is managed with more accuracy, than by collecting it indiscriminately at all periods of the year. The *Digitalis* collected, and prepared as I have suggested, may be preserved either in the form of *powder* closely confined ; or in the form of a *saturated tincture*.—If one ounce of the plant in powder, be added to five ounces of proof spirit, the combination will form a tincture fully saturated ; which must also be closely confined from the air.—This tincture retains its qualities longer than the powder, and may be employed when the latter is expended, or when it loses the colour, and flavour primarily attached



to it. The dose of both the powder, and the tincture must be left to the judgment of the prescriber ; I think it adviseable, however, to begin with small doses, and to increase the quantity, till I know that my patient is under its influence. I have uniformly observed that the *Digitalis* succeeds best, when it is thrown into the system, so gradually, as not to exhibit any of its effects previous to the termination of the first, or the commencement of the second week of its administration. If the plant be of good quality, and if it be judiciously given, its powers will be conspicuous before the conclusion of the second week ; and it is a matter of the last importance, at this period, to mark its operation with the most vigilant care.

I have remarked, that, when a patient comes under the influence of the *Digitalis*, he complains of a little heaviness and drowsiness, with a slight affection of vision, and a sensation of a want, or faintness about the region of the stomach. ~~These~~ Those phænomena, do very generally precede its

action on the heart ;—its power over the motion of the heart is, however, eventually exerted ; and the diminution of the pulse is entirely at the will of the prescriber ; for he may, and with safety too, reduce the strokes of the artery from 120, to 70, 60, 50, or even 40 in a minute ; and if he manage the exhibition of the *Digitalis* skilfully, he may keep the pulse at any of those degrees for any unlimited period of time.

If the number of pulsations be reduced below 70, or 60 in a minute, they will frequently be subject to intermissions ; and sometimes a violent vomiting will ensue ;—this last symptom has often occurred, when the distant abode of my patients prevented me from judging with precision, when they came under the influence of the plant. The vomiting, however, after continuing a few hours, sometimes a few days, generally subsides without the exhibition of any antidote ; and the operation, I have observed, is almost constantly attended with effects manifestly beneficial to the patient.—I have never had occasion to employ any remedy to obviate the vio-

lence of vomiting.—For this purpose, however, *Brandy*, *Opium*, the *vegetable* and *mineral Acids*, and *Blisters* applied to the region of the stomach, have been recommended.

The virtue of the *Digitalis* (which certainly approximates to a specific, in the primary stages of *Consumption*) is, in my opinion, to be ascribed exclusively to its dominion over the heart. If the transmission of the blood thro' the lungs be performed with only half its morbid velocity, I expect that the secretion from that organ will be proportionably lessened ;—that the dyspnœa and cough will consequently be diminished ; and that whatever be the cause of the symptomatic fever, it will be effectually subdued,—and of course, the debilitating discharges attached to it, will be rendered unnecessary.

I am persuaded that the *Digitalis* possesses in itself a power *directly sedative*, and that the application of this power, by lessening the irritability of the muscular fibre, will explain its



salutary operation in the cure of *Pulmonary Consumption*.

It has been observed that *collections of water* disappeared, during the exhibition of the *Digitalis*, and without any extraordinary flow of urine. I apprehend that an explanation of this fact will be attended with considerable difficulty ; for I believe it to be questionable, if not incorrect reasoning, to contend that there exists a power, which can at the same time diminish the action of one system of vessels, and increase that of another.—The operation of the *Digitalis*, very certainly lessens the secretion by the *exhalent arteries* ; but whether it affect the system of *absorbents* otherwise, than by intercepting the further supply of fluid, and leaving them at liberty to take up what is already poured out, demands, I think, a doubt. The *absorbent vessels*, and their range of action, are perhaps not sufficiently well understood ; but we know that their powers are sometimes extended to the absorption of even the osseous parts of the system.

It has been asserted that the power of the *Digitalis* in reducing vascular action, is referrible to the sickness which it induces, and that the same thing may be done by the exhibition of any nauseating substance ; but to this I reply, that all nauseating substances, at the same time that they diminish the velocity of the pulse, they are found to lessen the firmness of the stroke ; and their action is soon over ;——now, a reduction of the pulse in point of frequency, is generally accomplished by the *Digitalis*, without inducing sickness ;—without diminishing the firmness of the arterial stroke ;—and its effects are uniform and permanent. The *Digitalis* possesses a certain peculiar quality, which is capable of retarding the velocity of the circulating mass, without impairing the vigour of the system.—The action of *Opium* in some respects resembles the action of the *Digitalis*. *Opium* very constantly lessens the number of the arterial strokes, and rather increases their firmness ; but its effects are not so permanent as those of the *Digitalis* ; and if they were, we could not keep a patient for any length of time, under the influence of *Opium*,

without occasioning very injurious consequences. If a patient labour under a profuse expectoration, and if in this case, *Opium* be repeatedly administered, we shall find the lungs immediately overwhelmed with a load, which is with much difficulty discharged.—But if under circumstances precisely similar, the system be charged with the *Digitalis*, the secretion from the lungs, and the symptoms connected with this secretion, are almost all completely obviated; and the small portion of pus or mucus which continues to be secreted, is expectorated with the greatest facility.

I have thus briefly noticed the opinions which I have formed relative to the action of the *Digitalis*. —I have to observe, however, that whether those opinions be well founded or not, certain it is, the *Digitalis*, if judiciously administered, will be found a very valuable remedy indeed in all cases of *Pulmonary Consumption*.——In support of this conclusion, I refer the reader to the experience of various practitioners, detailed in the *Medical and Physical Journal*. Were I to exhibit here full histories of the beneficial effects



of the *Digitalis*, I should much exceed the bounds which I have prescribed for this essay ; I shall, however, continue to communicate the result of my observations, thro' the medium of the interesting work mentioned above.

If *Pulmonary Consumption*, be found to destroy annually, in this island, a fourth or fifth part of the human species, it is certainly proper, that every evidence, which goes to prove the salutary influence of any remedy in the cure of that disease, should be brought forward as speedily as possible.——Let this observation propitiate those, who are inclined to think that the testimony contained in this essay, relative to the virtues of the *Digitalis*, is premature.——The *modus operandi* of the plant, has never yet, perhaps, been clearly understood :——My ideas of its action are probably imperfect,—perhaps, they are erroneous ;——I cannot entertain a doubt, however, of the correctness of my observations respecting its efficacy ; and I have the fullest belief, that *Hectic* fever, and its appendages, may be kept in check, and that the terrors of *Pulmonary diseases*,

will eventually disappear, by means of a regular and skilful exhibition of the *Digitalis*.

If there be a mass of *positive* evidence to prove that the *Digitalis* has cured *Pulmonary Consumption* ; I pay little regard to any *negative* testimony ;—for I know that much may be lost or won, in the management of a case of *Phthisis*, by the mode of exhibiting the remedy.

Before I conclude this essay, I think it of high importance, that I should notice the opinions of some popular writers, upon the subject of the **DIGITALIS**.——There are men of much professional celebrity, who, have in strong language, represented the effects of the plant to be injurious and highly dangerous.——I am fully convinced that any terrors, respecting the deleterious effects of the **DIGITALIS**, are the fruits of an injudicious administration of the plant ; for I am persuaded that I have prescribed the **DIGITALIS** in several hundreds of cases ; and I never remember an instance of its producing any effect which gave me the smallest uneasiness.——This ob-

servation, corresponds, I believe, very exactly with the experience of the medical men of this place. Messrs. Maud, Outhwaite and Sharp have been ambitious to ascertain, with precision, the real virtues of the plant; and the former gentleman, has, I believe, for many years, used it very extensively.—— This I know that almost a dozen years ago, he prescribed with singular success, in hydropic cases, a combination of the *Digitalis*, *Opium* and *Cuprum Vitriolatum*; and I have heard him relate that at that time, he was in the habit of remarking what he called a “*Digitalis* pulse,” but he was inclined to ascribe this effect upon vascular action, partly to the *Opium*, with which he combined the plant.——Now, altho’ Mr. Maud, gave the *Digitalis* in doses sufficient to bring his patients under its influence, and altho’ he was not fully aware of some of its qualities, yet, during a period of several years he exhibited it without ever once witnessing any violent effects produced by its use.



I also know that in one case, *Mr. Sharp* exhibited the *Digitalis*, to a patient of his, and kept him completely under its influence for several weeks, without inducing any unpleasant symptom.—Recourse was not had to the *Digitalis*, till the patient had advanced to the last stage of *Pulmonary Consumption*; yet at this period, *Mr. Sharp* assured me, that by its means, he had very certainly arrested the progress of the disease.

If it be true that the *Digitalis*, under judicious management, can be administered for a length of time with the most perfect safety; it is much to be lamented, that either the rash hand of inexperience, or the weight of high authority, should be exerted to crush the rising reputation of a plant, which, I am persuaded, will one day occupy a distinguished place among the instruments of the healing art.

That amiable and excellent Physician, who first excited public attention to the powers of the *Digitalis*; foresaw, and foretold what would be

the fate of the plant, if it fell into improper hands :—and the enormous doses, in which it has been incautiously given, have too certainly led to the accomplishment of his prediction.—

Effects highly deleterious, have in some instances appeared, during the exhibition of the *Digitalis* ; and it has sometimes been laid aside as a remedy much too violent for internal use.

I believe that the DIGITALIS is very generally thrown into the system in doses too large, and too frequently administered ; and I think, that even Dr. *Withering*, himself, committed some errors in this way ;—for altho' he gave from one, to three grains of the plant, only twice a day, yet it appears, that, when administered in this manner, its operation was sometimes unexpectedly violent : Now, I am persuaded, that this need never happen ;—and I believe that as often as it does happen, it is more or less subversive of the salutary consequences we expect from the use of the plant ;—for I am of opinion, that the beneficial influence of the DIGITALIS can only be obtained, by slowly charging the system with it,

and gradually reducing the motion of the heart to that degree, which may be deemed the best adapted to the phænomena of health.—This belief seems to have forced itself, at last, upon the mind of Dr. *Withering*; for he observes, “that from some recent cases, he is induced to think that the DIGITALIS may be given in small doses, so as to cure the disease without interruption.”

It is certainly true that Dr. *Withering* never employed the DIGITALIS with much success in *Pulmonary Consumption*;—I am not in possession of evidence sufficient to enable me to assign a cause for this failure; nor do I know why Dr. *Withering's* experience upon this subject should be at variance with much recent observation.—I conclude, however, that his attention was wholly absorbed by its hydragogue powers, and that he never extended its use fully to the treatment of *Pulmonary Consumption*; I imagine that this is the case, for he calls practitioners to the investigation of a subject which he says, he has not enough examined. It is a remarkable



fact, however, that altho', Dr. *Withering* seldom attempted to cure *Pulmonary Consumption* by the DIGITALIS, yet he describes the debile, *Phthisical* habit, as one, to which the curative powers of the DIGITALIS are well adapted ;—and his last inference is, “ that it has a power over the motion of the heart to a degree, yet unobserved in any other medicine ; and that this power may be converted to salutary ends.”—

Dr. LETTSOM, who has acquired much professional reputation, wrote a paper on the use of the DIGITALIS in hydropic cases, which was read to the Medical Society of London, so long ago as 1788, and which was afterwards published.—The Doctor's history of cases, and his inferences, relative to the qualities of the DIGITALIS, demand, I think, a little consideration.—He professes that, “ his intention is not to appreciate the powers of the plant, from its effects in collections of water, where there is a suspicion of a morbid visceral affection ; but from its effects in that species of dropsy, which in itself appears curable.”——This resolution is

highly proper; but in the very first case, in which Dr. LETTSOM prescribed the DIGITALIS, he appears to abandon it; for his description of the disease, under which his patient laboured, very distinctly proves it to be a morbid affection of the stomach.—I cannot imagine then, how Dr. LETTSOM could expect to cure, by means of the DIGITALIS, a case of *Ascites* in a person, who “ had indulged himself in the free use of spirits, as well as strong malt liquors; and who, “ for six months, had experienced uneasiness in “ the region of the stomach,” (occasioned, no doubt, by his intemperate mode of living,) “ with a gradual loss of appetite;” and who, “ when he did take nourishment, it was succeeded by a sense of oppression, and load in “ this viscus, and a nausea sometimes increasing to vomiting.”—In this case the DIGITALIS failed. The exhibition of any other remedy would have been equally unavailing. Dr. LETTSOM loosely marks some of the phænomena supposed to be produced by the plant; and he displays as a prominent feature of its action, a prostration of strength.—It is to be observed,

that he takes no account of the state of vascular action ; and therefore it will remain a doubt, whether his patient was, or was not, under the influence of DIGITALIS.

In the treatment of the second case, Dr. LETTSON was also unsuccessful.——The history of this patient very clearly demonstrates that he laboured under a combination of a confirmed morbid affection both in the stomach and liver. There was therefore as little to be expected in this, from the operation of the DIGITALIS, or from any other remedy, as there was in the former case.——Dr. LETTSON takes no notice of the state of vascular action.

The Doctor's third case is more strikingly presumptive of local disease, inducing *Ascites*, than even either of the foregoing ;——it is true that the subject of it had relinquished some of his habits, at a period, prior to his indisposition ; but it is certainly consistent with the observation of every practitioner, that diseases of the stomach are often slow and insidious in their ap-



proach ; and that they may exist for many years, without producing in the system a disorganization inductive of death.——This patient perished in consequence of an affection of the stomach, or other viscus, caused by habits of intemperance,——The history of this case furnishes no minutes respecting vascular action ; though other effects are noticed as being produced by the DIGITALIS.

Dr. LETTSOM's fourth case was a fair one for the operation of the DIGITALIS.——the event was favourable. The Doctor, however, did not trace the issue of the case to the virtues of the DIGITALIS ; but ascribes the recovery of his patient to a plan of treatment which he adopted subsequent to its use.—Dr. LETTSOM says, that his patient took the DIGITALIS, but he neither specifies the length of time she persisted in its use, nor does he notice any effect which it produced upon the motion of the heart ; but remarks generally, that “ she complained of being weaker, and more bloated ? ”

From Dr. LETTSOM's history of the fifth case, there arises a strong presumption of visceral disease; but, as the Doctor is silent respecting the operation of the means which he employed, subsequent to the use of the *Digitalis*; and as this latter was so ill managed in its mode of exhibition, as to prevent its being given more than a week, in a disease confessedly of many years standing, it could not be expected, that the *Digitalis* should be administered with effect.

The sixth case was relieved by the *Digitalis*; this relief was not permanent.—The case, however, is so loosely stated, that it is impossible to say, whether the *dyspnœa* preceded the *anasarca*; or the *anasarca* the *dyspnœa*; from the circumstance, however, of the patient labouring under a bad cough, accompanied by a purulent expectoration, there is good reason, I think, to believe, that the *anasarca* was symptomatic of some fixed affection of the chest.

The patient who is the subject of the seventh case, had complained of a want of appetite, and uneasiness about the region of the stomach, for two years, preceding the 5th of September, 1787, at which time, he consulted Dr. LETTSOM.—

Previous to this period, he had laboured under symptoms of *Jaundice* and *Anasarca*, for which he had taken a variety of remedies. Upon an artificial evacuation of the water, the small lobe of the liver could be felt “enlarged and indurated.” Dr. LETTSOM says that he had determined to try *Digitalis* in the smallest quantity at first, to avoid exciting nausea; and he prescribed half a dram of the powder of the *Digitalis*, a scruple of *Aromatic Species*, and *Cordial Confection* enough, to form fourteen pills; of which he directed one to be taken three times a day.—From the date of this prescription which was wrote on the 5th of September, the patient took almost seven grains of the powder of *Digitalis* daily, till the 16th of the same month; the dose was then increased, and he continued its use till the 19th. A slight nausea was only



produced ;——it never excited vomiting.——Had the plant which Dr. LETTSOM thus employed, been properly collected and preserved, I am confident that he could not have persisted half the time in the use of half the quantity, without endangering the patient's life.

The nature of this case, however, precluded all hope of deriving any beneficial effect from the *Digitalis*, either upon the supposition of the plant being of a good quality, or that it had been judiciously administered.

The eighth case is one of those, in which the use of the *Digitalis*, is interdicted by Dr. *Withering* ;——Dr. LETTSOM, however, thought proper to employ it ; and the plant was prescribed at a season of the year, when there was an opportunity of having it genuine.——A proper dose, perhaps, was also administered ; but it was accompanied by a purgative, which Dr. *Withering* asserts positively, has a tendency to check its diuretic effect. The plant was fruitlessly employed. Dr. LETTSOM does not say

that it purged his patient ; but there is every reason to suppose so, for as soon as she is directed to abandon its use, she took some restraining remedies.—It is further observed, that her strength and appetite were subsequently improved ; but there is nothing said about the action of the heart.

From the history of those cases it is sufficiently obvious, that Dr. LETTSOM did not administer the *Digitalis*, either in the manner, or to the description of patients, pointed out by Dr. *Withering* ; and therefore, their experience must have been widely different.—Dr. LETTSOM has very certainly misapprehended Dr. *Withering*, if he supposes the plant will operate more powerfully upon a robust country habit, than upon the delicate fibre of London ; for Dr. *Withering* carries his opinion so far, as to talk of reducing the system, as a preparative to the exhibition of the *Digitalis*.

Dr. LETTSOM remarks, that the *Digitalis* will lessen the velocity of the pulse ; and he adds,

that this effect has been produced within twenty-four hours after the use of the plant.—Respecting the received opinion of the power of the *Digitalis* over the heart, there can be no doubt; but this last observation is completely subversive of Dr. *Withering's* experience; who says that “thirty grains of the powder,” or “eight ounces of the infusion,” are generally taken before the patient exhibit symptoms of being under the influence of the plant;—if this statement be correct, four or five days at least must be employed, to administer with safety, the necessary quantity.—In my practice, I have usually prescribed from two to four grains of the powder of the *Digitalis* daily, and I have seldom witnessed any effect from it, till the termination of the first, or the commencement of the second week.—This observation corresponds pretty exactly with the experience of every man, with whom I have conversed, relative to the operation of the *Digitalis*.



Dr. LETTSOM continues to remark, that, “ if  
 “ the same dose be continued, in a day or two  
 “ the pulse acquires its usual quickness, or even  
 “ exceeds it ; but at the same time it generally  
 “ becomes depressed, and a languor is diffused  
 “ over the whole system.”

What sort of plant Dr. LETTSOM administered, under what circumstances he gave the *Digitalis*, or upon what experience he grounds this assertion, I know not ; but I know, that this opinion is altogether repugnant to every idea, which has hitherto been entertained relative to the operation of the plant ;—for I am well persuaded, that I can, by a judicious management of the *Digitalis*, keep the pulse slow, and at the same time undiminished in firmness, for weeks or for months ;—in support of this doctrine I could adduce an infinity of evidence ; the following history, however, affords a singular and striking testimony of its truth. The subject of this case who took the DIGITALIS, was a young woman, who exhibited some symptoms

of a morbid state of the mysentery ;—for several months her pulse had exceeded 120 strokes in the minute ;—I kept her under the influence of the plant for upwards of three months, during which period her pulse was never above 60 strokes in the minute ; and sometimes it was so low as 40 ;—except a faintness, accompanied by a little drowsiness, an occasional slight intermission in her pulse ; and, two or three attacks of vomiting, which went off without the employment of any remedy, she never experienced any unpleasant symptom.—She took upwards of 300 grains of the DIGITALIS during my attendance ; and I am persuaded, that had it been necessary, I could have continued to have given her the plant, till she had taken as many thousands.—By the use of the DIGITALIS combined with a small portion of CALOMEL she gradually recovered, and is now in the most perfect health.

During the time that a patient is under the influence of DIGITALIS my experience corresponds with Dr. LETTSOM's, respecting the vision being

very generally affected; and the patient seeing objects in colours different from what they really are.—I had a Phthisical young man lately under my care, who was charged with the DIGITALIS, (and upon whom its operation was eventually salutary,) to whom every object appeared white :—this phænomenon recurred every morning; and continued, sometimes, for half an hour.—I have observed, however, that the “appearance of flashes of fire passing before the eyes of the patient,” never occurs unless one or more violent vomitings, accompanied by a throbbing of the temples have supervened.

I never knew the DIGITALIS, except in one instance, either “impair the memory,” or “produce any staggering of the gait,” of people who were under its influence.

Dr. LETTSOM observes that “he has known almost total blindness produced by it, and in some instances to continue upwards of a month, after the medicine had been omitted.”——It is surely a most wonderful phænomenon that, ac-



according to Dr. LETTSOM, the power of the plant over the heart should terminate in a day or two,—and that too during its use ; and that the same plant should continue to exert its influence over the brain and organs of vision, for a whole month, after its discontinuance :—this belief, I think needs no comment :—it is certainly without the range of probability.

Dr. LETTSOM proceeds to state his terrors at the effects of the DIGITALIS ; and mentions his knowledge of “ two cases, where the limbs, particularly the lower extremities, were seized with tremors ; and that from some cause or other, both these patients died suddenly, in a manner most resembling apoplexy.” Dr. *Withering* on the other hand says, “ that a tendency to *Paralytic Affections*, or even a *stroke of the Palsy*, is no objection to its use ;”—and how should it, if the DIGITALIS possess powers directly sedative, and if diseases of this class, arise from a morbid irritability of the whole frame ?—That men are

seized with tremors, and that they die suddenly of apoplexy, are occurrences which take place every day ; but Dr. LETTSOM ought certainly to have given in detail, those cases, if he meant them to operate in deterring practitioners from the employment of the DIGITALIS. The Doctor, is so candid as to admit that some of the formidable phenomena which he describes, do not occur in every case ; and that the blaze of fire which he mentions appeared in one instance only ;—I think that nothing is so destructive of science as exhibiting the solitary testimony of an insulated fact ;—what has happened once, may occur again, but we are not to expect it.

“ The alarming prostration of strength,” (which Dr. LETTSOM describes,) “ the feeble pulse but just perceptible, the horrors of mind, “ and jactitation of body,” are images which I have never witnessed ; but on the contrary, I have regularly observed an increase of appetite and strength proportioned to the diminution of the velocity of the circulation ; and that the pulse was more dis-

ting, and felt more firm, as it became less frequent. Instead of "mental horrors," and "bodily jactitation," I have uniformly perceived a placid composure of mind, and a general sensation of comfort and ease to pervade the whole frame, — even in those deplorable cases, where all that can be achieved by our art, is to smoothe the bed of death.

I have thus briefly treated of the curative effects of the DIGITALIS in *Scrophula* and *Pulmonary Consumption*. — I have carefully investigated and detailed facts as they appeared to me. — I have animadverted upon opinions which claim an origin of high respectability ; but I hope that a consideration of the importance of the truth will readily propitiate professional celebrity. — As I trust that no authority, however great, can crush the spirit of enquiry which has gone abroad respecting the DIGITALIS, — I have the fullest confidence that future experience will permanently establish the rising reputation of the plant. — I have lately turned my attention to those powers which may



be employed with advantage, as auxiliaries to the **DIGITALIS**, in the cure of *Consumption*; and I am extending its use to the cure of other diseases.— The result of my observations shall in due time appear.

**FINIS.**



**BRADFORD: PRINTED BY R. SEDGWICK.**

